

From: Britt Blaser
To: Microsoft ATR
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Subject: Microsoft Settlement

A Subversion of US Power.

Who will be remembered as the official(s) who handed Microsoft the license to be the country's sole supplier of reading, writing and calculating tools?

Microsoft is already a larger economy than most nations, and is growing faster than any. More importantly, it levies a tax on every word written and read in our government and our military.

It is bad policy, and probably illegal, for the government to depend on a sole supplier for any significant resource. Yet the government's operations are dependent on the continuing forbearance of Microsoft in allowing the government's computers to function. Not only is Microsoft the sole contractor of one of the government's most pervasive products,

MMICROSOFT IS THE SOLE PURVEYOR OF OUR ABILITY TO GOVERN.

Absurd? History is littered with the corpses of governments that did not realize the source of their diminution. Just because Microsoft is not a government, is it to be taken any lighter than so many governments wielding inferior resources? We took Al Queada lightly until its real power was demonstrated.

If Microsoft's strength is not checked now, how will it be checked when it is stronger? Do we doubt its strength will grow? It is tempting (and easier) to dismiss the idea that Microsoft could wield its power unethically against its fellow citizens, but is it responsible to ignore the possibility?

Is there a guarantee that Microsoft's controlling interest cannot fall into the wrong hands? When most PCs are running XP V. 3, what is the remedy when an unforeseen but persistent registration error causes USDOJ computers to perform unreliably.

Of course this is absurd today, but when is it no longer absurd? Is any of us wise enough to say it can never happen? What set of unforeseen circumstances would have to occur for this settlement to become the most foolish lapse of governance in our history?

Respectfully submitted,

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